

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS  
GALVESTON DIVISION**

**MICHAEL BAZZREA, SABRINA §  
WILDER, COURTNEY CHEATUM, §  
TIMOTHY JORDEN, CALEB §  
WADSWORTH, §**

for themselves and all others  
similarly situated,

## Plaintiffs

**V.**

**Civil Action No.** \_\_\_\_\_

**ALEJANDRO MAYORKAS, in his  
official capacity as Secretary of  
the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
HOMELAND SECURITY,**

**LINDA L. FAGAN, in her official  
capacity as Commandant of the  
UNITED STATES COAST  
GUARD,**

**LLOYD AUSTIN, in his official  
capacity as Secretary of the U.S.  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE,**

**JANET WOODCOCK, in her  
official capacity as Acting  
Commissioner of the U.S. FOOD  
AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION**

## Defendants.

[illegible]

**CLASS ACTION  
COMPLAINT FOR  
DECLARATORY AND  
INJUNCTIVE RELIEF  
  
JURY TRIAL DEMAND**

# Declaration of Courtney Aaron Cheatum

I, Petty Officer First Class Courtney Aaron Cheatum, USCGR, do hereby declare as follows:

1. I am over the age of 18 years, have personal knowledge of the matters set forth in this Declaration, and if called upon to testify to them, I would and could do so competently.
2. I am currently domiciled in Round Rock, Williamson County, Texas.
3. I am a Boatswain Mate in the United States Coast Guard Reserve (USCGR) currently serving at Station Galveston, Texas. My current enlistment was supposed to last until at 03 APR 2024, at which point, I had planned completing another two-year extension. My anticipated retirement date was APR 2026.
4. I enlisted in the United States Coast Guard in JUN 2000, graduated from Basic Training and then attended Quartermaster "A" school, Yorktown Virginia until graduating DEC 2000. Upon graduation, I was assigned to USCG Cutter Vashon, San Juan, PR. I received an award for exceptionally fulfilling the role of my E-6 supervisor as an E-4 due to his early departure.
5. In 2002, I was transferred to ANT Moriches, East Moriches, NY. I earned my first coxswain qualification at my one-year mark, even though I was never required to do so in my four-year assignment. I also achieved the rank of E-5 within my first two years of enlisting, an unusual accomplishment. I received a medal for my outstanding performance and superior attention-to-detail which was a significant contribution to my unit earning the highly coveted "Kimball Award".
6. Following a successful four-year tour, I transferred to Station Galveston, TX. Within just a few months a became a fully qualified Search & Rescue coxswain on all the units' assets. I also became a United States Coast Guard Boarding Officer and the units' tactical training officer. In 2011, I switched over from Active Duty to the Reserves and

received a medal for superior performance in training and specific Search & Rescue cases resulting in numerous lives saved from certain death.

7. Since recruit training, I have now served honorably for 22 years, and I will continue to do so God willing. Throughout my career, I have been involved in Migrant and Drug Interdiction, a Federal Law Enforcement and Fisheries Officer, a fully-vested member for the U.S. State Department Maritime Antiterrorism Assistance Training Program, and Search & Rescue Coxswain. I have saved many lives to which I am so proud to have had the honor to do so.

8. I submitted a Religious Accommodation (RA) request in response to the COVID shot mandate on 29 NOV 2021 via my chain of command.

9. On 31 JAN 2022, I received my denial letter dated 27 JAN 2022 with a notation from the denying official stating [they] “[did] not question the sincerity of my religious belief or whether vaccine requirements would substantially burden [my] religious practice”.

10. I appealed the initial denial on 09 FEB 2022 within the allotted ten-day timeframe.




11. I have had one documented case of testing positive of the Covid-19 virus on 28 JAN 2022 from my children’s school nurse.

12. On 8 JUL 2022, facing a loss of earned retirement, loss of VA benefits, inability to advance in rank, loss of medical insurance, being processed for discharge with a less than Honorable discharge after 22 years, and under duress, I violated my own religious conviction by receiving the initial Covid-19 vaccine.

13. True and correct copies of the initial appeal, denial the first denial, and my appeal submission are attached hereto as Exhibit A-1.

14. I declare under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the United States, that the foregoing statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Executed this July 21, 2022

    
Courtney Aaron Cheatum, E-6